

2233

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY
REMARKS AT THE NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY OF CHINA
BEIJING, CHINA
OCTOBER 18, 1994

INTRODUCTION: The distinguished Secretary of Defense Dr. Perry of the United States, distinguished guests, friends and comrades. The month of October is the best season in our capital, Beijing. We are delighted and privileged to receive Dr. Perry and his party in this very beautiful season. I would like to express, on behalf of the University of National Defense, a warm welcome to you, Dr. Perry, and other distinguished American friends. Mr. Secretary, you have visited China many times, and you have made unremitting efforts towards the development of the relations and friendship between China and the United States. We believe your current visit will contribute positively to the improvement of the state-to-state and military-to-military relations between China and the United States. Mr. Secretary, although you have a very tight program in China, you have still decided to come and visit our university and deliver a speech entitled "The Sino-U.S. Relationship and Its Impact on World Peace", for which we would like to offer our sincere thanks. Now let us give this Secretary a warm round of applause and welcome him to deliver his speech.

DR. PERRY: Thank you very much for that warm introduction. It is a great honor for me to be here and meet with the leadership of the PLA. The British author, Graham Greene, once wrote, "There always comes a moment in time when a door opens and lets the future in."

With the ending of the Cold War, a door has opened for the Asia-Pacific region. Together, the nations of this region can work to shape that future to make it prosperous, peaceful and secure.

The Asia-Pacific region today is more peaceful more stable than at any time in its history. The rivalry of the Cold War has been washed away by a floodtide of democracy and economic progress. And throughout the region there is a sense of increased confidence and optimism about the future.

The seeds of this triumph were actually sown during the Cold War as Asian nations undertook market reforms and began building strong trade links with their neighbors and the rest of the world. The results have been extraordinary.

The gross domestic product of this region essentially matches that of the United States and Europe combined. Asia now accounts for a third of the world's gross world product.

This enormous economic growth now makes the prosperity of Asia essential to the economic health of the world. And good economic

2234

relations require healthy political ties. Consequently, leaders around the globe are placing increased importance on their relations with the nations of this region.

President Clinton has done so, including convening the first-ever meeting of leaders of the region last November in Seattle, at which time he met President Jiang Zemin.

The challenge facing us today is to ensure that this region's stability and prosperity are strengthened for future generations.

The United States and China share a special responsibility for making this happen. That's why I am here today.

I want to talk to you this morning about the reasons why our security relationship is so important and about some of the most important challenges that we face.

I want to talk about the importance of building ties between our two militaries.

There are four principal reasons why the United States and China share a special responsibility to secure the present and future stability in the West Pacific.

The first is strategic. The size of our countries and their populations, our vast natural resources, and the creative spirits of the peoples combine to make the United States and China key players in the Asia Pacific region, with China at one end of the Pacific and the United States at the other. Together we play a defining role in every aspect of the region's economy and security. This is not an idle boast. And I do not want to downplay the contributions of other nations in the region. But history shows that when the United States and China enjoy positive, stable relations, the entire region benefits.

The second reason our nations have a special obligation to get along is that we have many overlapping interests. Both the United States and China regard economic progress and the economic well-being of our people as a vital national priority. And economic progress requires, above all, stability and peace. Fortunately, the economic strengths of our two countries complement each other, and the forces favoring cooperation between us are growing stronger all the time.

The third reason our relationship is so important is the danger posed by proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. China and the United States are two of a handful of nations capable of producing both. Early this month, our two governments signed important agreements to control missile transfers and fissile material production. This was an important step, but more needs to be done to promote global security by

limiting weapons of terror and mass destruction.

Restraint by China in transferring these technologies, in concert with the United States and other major powers, is vital to the success of current global non-proliferation regimes. Indeed, without the full participation of both China and the United States, no effort against proliferation can be successful.

Fourth, because China and the United States play such key roles in Asia, our cooperation is essential to solving the major threats to regional stability.

This won't be easy. The Cold War world was one of great danger, but it was also somewhat stable. The thaw that came with the end of the Cold War alleviated one of the greatest dangers -- that of a nuclear world war. But the new world is more complex and still dangerous. Right now, Asia faces many challenges and threats to its stability; challenges and threats that require Chinese-American cooperation. This morning, I want to focus on four of those challenges.

The most serious challenge is on the Korean Peninsula. There are both a nuclear and a political connection to this challenge.

Let me consider first the nuclear dimension. If North Korea produces nuclear weapons, the peace and security of Northeast Asia will be threatened, and the worldwide effort to control weapons of mass destruction will be dealt a heavy blow. I have discussed this with Minister of National Defense Chi, and I believe that we have a common view on this issue. North Korea must honor its commitment to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to its agreement with South Korea for a de-nuclearized Korean peninsula.

Both United States and China support a nuclear-free Korean peninsula. Right now, we are deeply engaged in discussions and dialogue with North Korea. Just this morning I have heard that the negotiations in Geneva have reached agreement. I am hopeful that this agreement will result in the ending of the nuclear threat from North Korea. All during these negotiations we have consulted very closely with your government which has been very helpful.

The second dimension of the challenge is finding ways to reduce the overall tensions on the peninsula that have plagued the Korean people and their neighbors for half a century.

We are deeply interested in the long term future of the Korean Peninsula and its contribution to peace and stability in the region. And we want to work with China to ensure that peace and stability. But only the Korean people themselves can address the root causes of the tensions between them. That is why it is so important for the North and South to revive their dialogue and work

2236

towards removing military confrontation and increasing economic and human ties.

Reducing tensions in Northeast Asia also depends on other outside factors. America's security alliances and military presence in Northeast Asia, I believe, are key components of the region's stability. A keystone to security in Asia is the firm fabric of strategic ties and the military alliance between the United States and Japan. The people and the governments of Japan and the United States are committed to maintaining and strengthening the alliance to deal with the challenges of the post-Cold War world. I believe that this alliance is a force for stability.

The American and South Korean security alliance is also an important force for regional peace and stability. The United States will maintain a ground and air military presence on the peninsula for as long as the Republic of Korea and the Korean people feel that it meets their security interests.

The second challenge to regional security in Asia lies in South Asia.

We are on the brink of a nuclear weapons race on the subcontinent, where relations between India and Pakistan have been tense for years. India and Pakistan have the right to have a strong defense, but the combination of nuclear weapons and enduring tension could prove catastrophic to both countries, indeed to the entire region. As in the case with Korea, China has a huge stake in this issue since it involves nations on its border.

With so much at stake, it is essential that countries with influence in South Asia try to stop the potential arms race before it gathers momentum. The recent progress between the United States and China on missile technology and fissile material is a positive step in that direction. But we must do more if we are to prevent a South Asia nuclear arms race.

A third challenge we face lies in the South China Sea.

This situation has been a source of tension for years, and it creates anxiety about the future. If disputed territorial claims to the Spratly Islands erupt into conflict, it could be a devastating blow to regional security and threaten sea lines of communication vital to the United States and to other countries of the world. Inflammatory statements and military deployments help keep tensions high. They also prevent the development of natural resources which might help reduce tensions. That's why I am encouraged by the stated desire of China and Vietnam to avoid conflict. I am also encouraged by the Indonesian-led efforts to find a long-term solution to the disputed territorial claims

2237

involving other nations. What is needed are permanent and peaceful solutions to these problems.

The fourth regional security issue is Taiwan.

Over the past twenty-two years, six American administrations have demonstrated America's commitment to abiding by the terms of the Taiwan Relations Act and the Three Communiques between China and the United States. Responsibility for resolving differences lies with Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Straits. The overriding United States interest is that the resolution be peaceful and not threaten regional security. Not long ago, relations across the straits reflected fierce hostility between the two sides. But today, economic and cultural relations are robust and are growing stronger every day.

More significantly, political contacts appear to be developing at a pace that both sides are comfortable with. We welcome any progress that the two sides can agree upon. Overall, military tension has been reduced and the situation is far less volatile.

This is a promising trend accomplished by the two sides. And we believe that our policies contributed to these positive developments. These policies include strict adherence to the agreements between China and the United States and include the maintenance of unofficial relations with Taiwan. This will not change.

None of the challenges to Asian stability and security can be fully met without cooperation between the United States and China. Each of us has a particular kind of influence and each of us must use this influence appropriately. Maintaining regional stability is our cooperative task. It is also the strategic basis for our relationship.

An important component of a healthy political relationship between our two countries is military-to-military ties. By building trust, these ties contribute to our ability to solve regional problems.

One way that military ties build trust is by helping both sides understand each other's defense policies and strategic intentions. Both of our countries need to do better in this area. And indeed, that is a major purpose for my visit here today. China is a large country with a proud, independent spirit. Your capabilities in all areas, including military areas, is growing every day. This growth, particularly in the military area, creates much speculation in Washington and in capitals throughout Asia.

We welcome your assurances about the focus of your defense budget and the peaceful, defensive orientation of your

modernization program. Nevertheless, it would be helpful if your defense budget and strategic planning were more open and visible to the outside world. This would contribute to stability in the Asia-Pacific region. We have nothing to fear from a better understanding of each other.

Of course, we understand that this is a two-way street. And we want you to know about the United States military planning as well. I know that some in China believe that the United States regards China as a threat, or at least a future threat.

As Secretary of Defense of the United States, I can assure you that those who make these arguments do not understand American defense policy. The fact that some people believe them just highlights the need for greater openness and understanding.

For all of these reasons I'm pleased that in the past year we've begun rebuilding ties between our militaries. Just last August, your Deputy Chief of General Staff General Xu Huizi visited the United States. We were able to talk very frankly and productively about each other's concerns. I am convinced that our two militaries are working towards the same goals of mutual understanding, peace and stability.

We want to build military-to-military ties with China that will endure long into the future. Doing this means building a consensus and strong foundations of domestic support in the United States. No military relationship can grow in a vacuum and it can not survive without a healthy political relationship.

I must tell you that the idea of U.S.-China military-to-military ties has its critics in the United States, in the capitals of our allies, and, I'm sure, in China as well. That's why we must proceed cautiously and within a framework of overall progress in our relations, including difficult issues like non-proliferation and human rights. But we must proceed.

I envision a relationship that is led by our defense officials, but that rests on a solid foundation of officers -- like yourselves -- who will lead the armed forces into the Twenty-First Century. I can assure you that your American counterparts who also proudly wear their uniform, share this vision.

In the past two hundred years, the United States and China have met under various circumstances and for various purposes. At times we have opposed each other. At other times, we've been drawn together by common interests.

From the outset of his Administration, President Clinton decided that our countries needed to follow the path of cooperation instead of confrontation. That is why he launched a policy of comprehensive engagement, including a resumption of the military ties which I am discussing today. And that is why he renewed Most

2239

Favored Nation trading status for China, to pave the way for expanding our ties. I have strongly supported these policies.

Now the challenge is to use our expanded ties for our mutual advantage and for the benefit of peoples around the world.

China is a great nation.

China's influence reaches every corner of Asia and, increasingly, the world. Your future is important to us and to all of the Asia-Pacific region, indeed is important to the world.

In the Chinese classic "The Art of War" by Sun Tzu, there is some good advice about how to maintain peace. It says, "always remember danger when you are secure and remember chaos in times of order, watch out for danger and chaos while they are still formless and prevent them before they happen..."

I hope my trip to China helps both of our nations use the security and order in our present relationship to prevent dangers and to build a lasting peace for the future.

Thank you very much.

MODERATOR: Now if you would like to ask questions of the Secretary of Defense.

Q: Major General Gao Zung Shin, a student of the department studies of the National Defense University. Mr. Secretary, just now I listened carefully to your speech. Mr. Secretary, in the first part of your speech, you analyzed the situation in the Asia Pacific region, you have also analyzed the importance of the improvement and development of the Sino-US friendship and relations through the maintenance of peace in Asia and the Pacific. My question is, what role will the United States play in the maintenance of peace and security in the Asia Pacific region. Thank you.

PERRY: The United States interests in the Asia Pacific region, the United States economic interests in the Asia Pacific region are very large. These can only be realized if peace and stability is maintained in this region. Therefore we have a very strong interest in maintaining that peace and stability. We achieve that in several different ways. Let me give you several examples of things we do to try to achieve that. First through diplomatic means, for example, in the negotiations with North Korea to try to achieve peace and stability in the Korean peninsula. Second, by our efforts in cooperation with other nations to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

Third, by our security alliances in the area, for example, with Japan and Korea. Let me point out to you that the security alliance with Japan, for example, gives Japan a reason for not having a major arms build up of their own. The United States so-called nuclear umbrella for Japan and Korea give both of those nations a reason for not having a nuclear development program of their own. That's why I believe those alliances contribute to the security and stability in the entire region.

2240

And finally we manifest our commitment to those alliances through United States military strength. A small portion of that military strength is forward deployed in the Asia Pacific region. In particular of our 1.6 million people in our armed forces, about 100,000 of them are deployed in the Western Pacific.

And we maintain a continuing naval presence in the Western Pacific, including a carrier battle group. Thank you.

Q:I am Major General Dru Song Do, a professor of strategy instruction and studies office of the University. We have noted that in your country's defense program for the next five years, you have formulated a guiding principle for military strategy of fighting and winning two larger scale regional conflicts at the same time. Mr. Secretary, what impact will this have on the building of the U.S. armed forces and on the regional security. Thank you.

PERRY: Let me first of all clarify the foundation for the commitment to having an armed forces that can fight and win two major regional conflicts. We do not expect to have to fight two major regional conflicts. Our theory is that if we get engaged in one major regional conflict, we do not want at that point to be vulnerable to attack by a country that would believe that we are tied up and we cannot handle a second. We believe that our present military forces are capable today of handling two major regional conflicts, with two exceptions which I will mention. That is there are two areas of improvement that are needed to be fully ready to do this. One of these is in the capacity of our lift, both airlift and sealift. They will have to be increased and modernized in order to deal with two major regional conflicts in very different parts of the world.

The other of these requires completing the modernization of our so-called precision guided munitions, and making them available to all of the tactical platforms, tactical aircraft which deliver these weapons. Both of these are in our modernization programs and should be achieved in the next few years. In the meantime, the potential for a second major threat, namely a threat in the Mid East we believe is many years in the future. Iran could pose such a threat in the future, but has not yet developed the military capability to make it a major regional threat. And Iraq, which is the other potential mideast regional threat, had its military seriously weakened by the Gulf war in 1991 and therefore will not be able to pose a major regional threat for many years to come.

I make this latter point in spite of the challenge which Iraq posed to Kuwait just two weeks ago. This move on their part was not only ill advised politically, it was ill advised from a military point of view because they do not have the military capability to make good on their threat. Indeed a major objective of the sanctions which have been imposed on Iraq is to keep them from being able to pose such a threat to their neighbors again.

Q: I am.....deputy director of the foreign Armed Forces Instruction and Research Office. We have noted that in July of this year, your government has officially made public your country's new national security strategy, the strategy of enlargement and engagement. Mr. Secretary, what is the apparent link between this new strategy and your earlier strategy, the strategy of enlargement, and what are the differences between the two. Thank you.

PERRY: The first point that I would make is that this really represents an evolution from our previous strategy, not a discontinuity, not a major change. A key part of this strategy is embodied in the term engagement. It envisions that our security is best served not by confronting nations who were formerly our adversaries, but in trying to engage them.

One primary example of that lies with our cooperative program with Russia to facilitate the reduction of their nuclear weapon arsenal. A part of our defense budget is allocated to assisting Russia in dismantling nuclear weapons that it has. This is a very unconventional component of the defense budget. We call it defense by other means. That is a very good investment in the security of the United States. I am honored to have on my delegation in this visit to China, the co-author of the legislation which made this program possible. That is Senator Sam Nunn from the state of Georgia. I would like to introduce Senator Nunn and ask him if he might want to say a word to you about this program.

NUNN: Thank you Mr. Secretary. First I am delighted to be back in China and to observe the tremendous progress you have made since I was last here in the early 1980s. Second, I would like to echo what Secretary Perry has said about the importance of the relationship between China and the United States, and add that the relationship is important to the world in terms of security.

Third in reference to what the Secretary has mentioned of what's now called the Nunn-Lugar Program, that is, assistance to the former Soviet Union, it was a very difficult challenge to get that through the Congress of the United States. It was very difficult after having spent 4 trillion dollars over the last 50 years in defending against what we perceived to be the Soviet threat to then tell our colleagues in the Congress that it was time to spend money helping them dismantle all that threat.

But we were able to do that and now we have a program underway to help the former Soviet Republics dismantle and handle safely their nuclear weapons, their chemical weapons and their biological weapons. They now have at least 800 less... that are now operational because of the cooperation of this program. All of our nations that have built nuclear chemical weapons face a major job in trying to handle those weapons safely and begin to reduce those weapons in an environmentally safe way. It is my hope and mission that countries like the United States and Russia and China that have built nuclear weapons for defensive purposes will now work

together in dismantling those weapons and reducing the danger of nuclear weapons ever being used any where in the world.

We now have the added threat of organized, criminal gangs working in the United States and working throughout the world and basically trying to secure enrich nuclear material for the purposes I have stated. This is a threat to all mankind, and we must work together to avoid this threat. We now have Russian organized criminal activity in the United States and we also have gangs called triads which you are very familiar with here in town. The one purpose of the so called Nunn Lugar legislation has been to foster a cooperative spirit among our law enforcement agencies throughout the world. And this is an area that I think has some real possibilities and potential between the United States and China. In any event I am delighted to be here and honored to be with the Secretary of Defense in making this very important presentation.

I hope that our young military outfit will be able to have interchanges in the future, and that we will have our young officers coming to China and your young officers coming to the United States. We have many Chinese students in the United States today. And everytime I go to a high school or college graduation I am always amazed to learn that the top students are from China and Asia. But we have much to learn from each other and this trip is part of that overall goal. Thank you.

PERRY: I would like to take the opportunity now to introduce briefly to you three other people who have been very important on this trip. First of all the two people who pioneered the preparation of this trip, made it all possible and made a preceding trip and paved the way for it, Ambassador Charles Freeman and Eden Woon. Would you two stand up please.

A man who has been my mentor in China and has advised me since before my first visit here in 1980 and has been a constant source of advise and friendship and without which, truly this trip would not have been possible is Professor John Lewis from Stanford, John would you stand up please. All three of these men are good friends of China and have worked tirelessly to promote better U.S. China relationship.

MODERATOR: This concludes the session of question and answer. Comrades, Secretary Perry has visited our country 9 times. He is an old friend of China. Just now he has introduced several other American friends to us.

As our Chinese adage says, when a friend comes from afar we will be overjoyed, so today we have not posed difficult questions to Secretary Perry. As a mark of friendship. Friends, comrades, Just now Secretary Perry has made a fascinating speech and has answered some questions from the faculty and students of the University. I believe this is of great significance to the promotion of our students of the international situation, the Sino U.S. relations and of the building of the armed forces. I suggest, let us give

the Secretary another warm round of applause to offer our sincere thanks for his speech and also for the presentation of his speech presentation by Senator Nunn.

Mr. Secretary, as you emphasized in your speech that the individual world the establishment of long-term, stable, friendly relations and cooperation between China and of the United States will not only bring benefits to our two peoples, but is also of major strategic significance to the maintenance of peace and stability in the Asia Pacific region and even in the world at large.

Although China and the United States do have some disagreements in some aspects and the development of relations between our two countries still encounters some difficulties, twists and turns, as long as our two sides fully recognize the common interests between us, seek a common ground, well sit aside our differences, take a forward looking attitude and adopt wise and farsighted policies in handling the problems between our two countries, I believe the relations between the armed forces of our two nations and between our two countries will surely enjoy continuous development.

We are very pleased to note the improvement in the relations between our two countries, our two militaries have resumed exchanges since November of last year. Our University of National Defense has also resumed the university-to-university relationship with your country's University of National Defense. We believe for enduring world peace and for the further development of the Sino-U.S. friendly relations and cooperation, our two militaries should strength our exchanges and we on the Chinese side are ready to make positive efforts towards this end. We hope our two militaries in the future will conduct more interchanges so that we can enhance and strengthen our exchanges at the various specialized levels, enhance our mutual understanding and learn from each other.

In closing, I would like to thank you Mr. Secretary and other distinguished American friends for your presence. I wish your visit to China accomplish success. Now I wish to present on behalf of the University of National Defense some souvenirs.

APPLAUSE.

PERRY: Thank you. Thank you very much. I will display these with great pride in my home.